

How Far Is "Up" For Notre Dame?

Already much has been said, much more will be written about the evils of college football. Whatever is said, or whatever will be done to correct the abuses that are supposed to exist, leave it to the experts; but let the rest of us enjoy the game. In decrying these abuses we need not forget, nor need we discredit the fine qualities that have made football the great American game it is.

It was Father John Cavanaugh, in 1947, who said, "We at Notre Dame make no apologies about wanting winners. We want our students to go out and win in debates, on the basketball floor, in track, in baseball, and in the much more important battles of life. . . . But with even more emphasis, we want Notre Dame men to win cleanly and according to the rules. . . . Notre Dame men are reared on this campus in this spirit."

A Wholesome Tradition.

Football Saturdays we get up for Mass and receive Holy Communion for the team. We don't want serious injuries; but we do want the team that is dedicated to the purest woman in God's whole creation, His Blessed Mother, to draw from its game the spiritual fruits that are proper to a work done well for a worthy cause.

It is a mistake to infer that our football games, or any other legitimate form of recreation, played even in the midst of the materialism of secular thinking, cannot contribute to Mary's honor and God's glory; that is, if we are to understand anything at all about what St. Paul meant when he said, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever else you do, do all for the glory of God."

There is an old-foggyish notion credited to men-folk that the business of worshipping God is the business of their women-folk. It is difficult for a kid, corralled in his cowboy stockade to understand what really makes a man a man. He can't reconcile piety with his gun-toting heroes, nor hands folded in prayer with fists clenched for a fight. The Devil's weapon of human respect has kept many a neophyte he-man away from what he calls "sissy stuff."

There has always been at Notre Dame a conscious effort to turn to God's purpose what the Devil would use against Him. The result is that there is nothing sentimental or pietistic, and consequently nothing unmasculine or unwholesome, about the piety of the football team, or, for that matter, of the students who back their team and cheer their throats hoarse for good old Notre Dame.

The freshman is first impressed by the quantitative factor of the number of upper-classmen who frequent the Sacraments. If he manages to crowd into Dillon chapel for the 9 o'clock Mass on football Saturdays, he is well aware of the unpretentious decorum of linemen and halfbacks, quarterbacks and coaches, kneeling and praying and assisting at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Impressed as he is by the quantity of the number of frequent communicants, the freshman soon discovers the qualitative factor by observing for himself, as he enlarges the scope of his acquaintances, that the finest and best representatives of the student body are not ashamed of their spirituality.

May God be good to this year's team. If He tried the Faith of last year's team, He may try it again this year. But come what may--good sportsmanship is good religion. Such has been Notre Dame's tradition in sport, such it will continue to be in the future.

Prayers: (deceased) uncle of Art Martin (Sor); Lt. Henry E. Tisdale (killed); grandmother of Bob Bergans (Dil); father of Sr. Mary John, S.N.D.; father of Samuel J. Bodanza, '51. Ill: grandmother of Henry and Paul Balling; aunt of Ed. Murphy (Mor); Jim Ackl; Mike Cuddihy; Art Eggers; Father Schulte, C.S.C. . . . 5 special intentions.